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ABSTRACT

A Delphi study identified probable responsibilities of departmental leaders in industrial teacher education (ITE) in the future. Three rounds of correspondence with a panel of experts were used to obtain ratings, arrive at consensus, and rank responsibility statements. The responsibility ranked most important was "manage department resources to achieve departmental goals" followed by "direct recruitment of more academically able students into teacher education programs." The panel also ranked the importance of eight topic categories in which responsibility statements were grouped. In rank order, the categories were: personnel, funding, external relations, curriculum, administration, technology/change, recruitment, and designation. Conclusions drawn from the panel's rankings indicated that major responsibilities of future department leaders in ITE will be efficient resource management, student recruitment, obtaining adequate levels of funding and related support services, obtaining external sources of funding, and motivation of faculty to keep curriculum and courses up-to-date. Consensus on future responsibilities of ITE departmental leaders provides data for improvement of programs to prepare and upgrade departmental leaders and offers prospective leaders an insight into the field and a database with which to compare expectations, interests, and abilities. (YLB)

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Major Responsibilities of Future Industrial Teacher Education Department Leaders

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Two topics which receive frequent attention in industrial teacher education (ITE) are departmental leadership and the possible futures of the profession. This continuing quest for appropriate leadership theories and practices for the future is necessary for any organization to continue to grow and flourish in a society dominated by rapid change. Both topics have been the focus of research, publications, and discussion at local and national conferences involving ITE personnel.

LaCroix (1983) provided a chronology of the profession's attempts to adjust to the demands, alternatives, and opportunities of the future. The 1976 Annual Conference of the American Industrial Arts Association (AIAA) held in Des Moines, Iowa, had the theme of "Crossroads '76." Similarily, "Industrial Arts: Which Way Now?" was the theme of the 1977 AIAA Conference held at New Orleans. Both themes represented efforts to identify purpose and direction for the field. LaCroix called these unmistakable efforts to determine and direct our charted course.

The volume of publications centering on leadership and the future underscores the importance of these issues. The American Council on Industrial Arts Teacher Education (ACIATE) monograph, The Future: A Challenge to Industrial Arts (Smalley & Lauda, 1975) and, more

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recently, the 32nd ACIATE Yearbook, The Dynamics of Creative Leadership for Industrial Arts Education (Wenig & Matthews, 1983) are two examples of works treating the topics. Indeed, it is rare for a month to pass without published mention of the future and/or leadership in ITE.

In attempting to address the concept of leadership, Marshall and Householder conducted a Delphi study. The researchers sought to identify probable responsibilities of departmental leaders in ITE in the future (1990). A nation-wide panel of experts participated in the attempt to forecast the future responsibilities of ITE departmental leaders. Their consensus on the future responsibilities of ITE department leaders provided data which should be helpful in the preparation of department leaders for ITE programs in the future. The responsibilities which were identified should be useful to universities which seek to improve programs designed to prepare and upgrade departmental leaders. The study also offers prospective leaders an insight onto the field and a data base with which they may contrast their expectations.

Method

An extensive nomination procedure was utilized to select the panel of experts (POE) in this study. The nominators were systematically selected from four segments within the profession: department leaders; full and associate professors; state supervisors; and researchers. One hundred nominators were asked to nominate individuals to serve on the POE. The twenty-five persons who were most frequently nominated and who agreed to participate in the study comprised the panel of experts.

Three rounds of correspondence with the panel of experts were used to obtain ratings, arrive at consensus, and rank responsibility statements for future department leaders in ITE. The Delphi panel group means were used to rank the relative importance of the respective statements.

Results

The responsibility ranked most important was "the ability to manage the resources of the department in a more effective manner to achieve departmental goals." The next most important responsibility was "directing the recruitment of more academically able student into the teacher education programs." In rank order, other highly-ranked responsibilities were: "obtain adequate levels of funding and related support services for laboratories, equipment, and staff from college and/or university sources;" "obtain external sources of funding to increase levels of support for program development and faculty research endeavors;" "coordinate the establishment of new programs as needed;" "motivate department faculty to join together to keep curriculum and courses up-to-date;" and "participate in determining future goals and directions of programs."

The responsibility statments were grouped by the researchers into eight topic categories, based upon the subject matter of the statements. As a part of the analysis, these categories of responsibilities were ranked in importance, based upon the grand means for the statements within each category. In decreasing order of importance, the

responsibility category considered most important was personnel, followed by funding, external relations, curriculum, administration, technology/change, recruitment, and designation, respectively.

TABLE 1

CATEGORY RATING

Category	Grand Mean
Personnel	8.09
Funding	7.95
External Relations	7.93
Curriculum	7.81
Administration	7.69
Technology/Change	7.47
Recruitment	6.64
Designation	5.03

The personnel category had the largest grand mean, indicating these responsibilities may be of major importance to future department leaders in industrial teacher education. The statement, which relates to provisions for faculty professional growth, led the category in potential importance. Additional responsibilities relating to the area of personnel were the ability of the department leader to promote a high degree of professionalism, the continual evaluation of the quality of teaching, and the coordination and monitoring of faculty development.

The funding category was ranked second in importance and contained the third and fourth most important individual responsibilities. Heading this category, and third overall, was the responsibility of obtaining adequate levels of funding and related support services for laboratories, equipment, and staff from college and/or university sources. The responsibility statement ranked fourth in importance dealt with obtaining external sources of funding to increase levels of support for program development and faculty research endeavors. Also noteworthy was the responsibility for competing effectively with other departments for scarce resources within a college or university.

The nature in which the profession interrelates with the external world was found to be the next most important category. Two responsibilities which ranked highest within this category were: improve the image of industrial education at all levels; and, work for and maintain better relationships with business, industry, government, public education and the community.

The category identified as curriculum ranked fourth in importance. Motivating department faculty to keep curriculum and courses up-to-date and the responsibility to ascertain appropriate directions and procedures for departmental curriculum development led this category. The responsibilities ranked next within this category both called for leadership roles. They were: provide leadership in instructional, research, and service activities; followed by: provide leadership in updating programs were ranked in that order, respectively.

Future administrative responsibilities of department leaders was ranked fifth as a category, though two responsibilities from the category were ranked among the top five. The most important administative responsibility of future department leaders was the management of the resources of the department in a more effective manner to achieve department goals. Ranked fifth in the listing of sixty responsibility statements was the administrative function of coordinating the establishment of new programs as needed. Other high-ranked responsibilities within this category were the provision of leadership in establishing and maintaining program accreditation, and the administration of faculty load assignments, scheduling and budgeting.

Technology and change, the sixth-ranked category, included the responsibility for participating in determining future goals and directions of programs. The panel of experts ranked this statement as the seventh most important responsibility of future department leaders. This category also included the responsibility for promoting the development of programs that reflect contemporary technology.

The next category, recruitment, included the second most highly-ranked single responsibility statement. The recuitment of more academically able students into the teacher education programs was deemed to be a very important responsibility of future department leaders. Also within this category was the function of stimulating outstanding young people in the profession to seek advanced degrees and accept leadership responsibilities.

The lowest-ranked category was the designation of the industrial teacher education profession. The statements within this category received the lowest ranking by the panel, indicating that this may not be a priority in the future. The consensus of comments was that a quality program is the primary goal and that its designation is secondary.

Discussion

Delphi panel members were quite consistent in their perceptions of the problems facing department leaders in industrial teacher education in the future. The responsibility statements developed by the Delphi panel are wide ranging, reflecting the various institutional settings, goals, and objectives of the respondents. The following conclusions were drawn from the rankings assigned by the panel on the future importance of the responsibility statements:

1. Efficiency in managing the resources of the department to achieve departmental goals will be of paramount importance to future department leaders in industrial teacher education.

2. The recruitment of more academically able students into the teacher education programs will be a major responsibility of future department leaders.

3. An important responsibility of future department leaders will be to obtain adequate levels of funding and related support services for laboratories, equipment, and staff from college and/or university sources.

4. Obtaining external sources of funding to increase levels of support for program development, coordinating the establishment of new programs as needed, and funding faculty research endeavors will be important tasks of future department leaders in industrial teacher education.

5. It will also be the responsibility of future department leaders to motivate the faculty to keep curriculum and courses up-to-date.

6. Future oriented planning will continue to be needed to determine future goals and directions of the industrial teacher education profession.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the rank ordering of the categories of responsibilities:

1. Industrial teacher education faculty should be given the opportunity and the encouragement to grow professionally in order to be current in their teaching assignments. The faculty as well as the curriculum must mirror up-to-date knowledge, techniques, and processes.

2. Department leadership will need to secure and manage resources which are adequate for operating contemporary programs, managing facilities, and maintaining accreditation. The administration of faculty load assignments, scheduling, and budgeting will remain primary responsibilities for future department leaders in industrial teacher education.

3. Superior results in industrial teacher edcuation will require quality facilities, curriculums which reflect contemporary technologies, and the recruitment and retention of more academically able students.

The following recommendations are based on the evaluation of the data collected for this study. In order to ensure the best possible future leadership in industrial teacher education, it is suggested that:

1. The responsibilities identified in this study should be considered in establishing priorities for the preparation of department leaders for industrial teacher education programs of the future.

2. Present department leaders could utilize these findings to guide their own professional development.

3. The identified responsibilities may be useful to universities as they seek to improve their programs designed to prepare and upgrade department leaders.

4. The major responsibilities identified in this study offer prospective practioners an insight into the field and a data base to which they may compare their expectations, interests, and abilities.

5. Comparisons between the data obtained in this study and existing graduate programs designed to prepare department leaders many suggest needs for revision.

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